23| bother to raise them; as a result the number of horses has decreased, and this country, formerly renowned for its mounts, may have none in a not too distant future.

Unfortunately, horses do not thrive in every part of the country; Ouagadougou is particularly deadly for them, although, to my knowledge, the true reason for this insalubrity has not yet been found. The natives attribute it to the water, and there is no doubt that horses watered at the wells are in better health than those watered at the streams; it is also true that horses thrive in areas only a few kilometers from Ouagadougou. Europeans tend to attribute this mortality to the [136] tsetse fly. The two opinions are easy to reconcile, for, on the one hand, tsetse flies prefer damp places, and, on the other hand, the [312] Ouagadougou wells contain salt of magnesium which purges the horses and thus checks the disease.

231 The Peul own fine herds of bovines, some rather small and without 563 humps (small cattle), others large and humped (zebu). Traders also 437 use the zebu as a beast of burden. Much of this cattle belongs to the Mossi who seldom tend their own herds but prefer to entrust them to the Peul shepherds who keep the milk in payment. An adult cow yields from two to four liters a day during the good season. The guardians, however, know how to make the best of this near slavery. When an animal dies it is never one of theirs, and if the owner of the herd /a Mossi/ dies without telling his heirs where his cattle is to be found and how many head he owns, the Peul carefully refrain from disclosing the herd entrusted to them. In former days they were slightly more conscientious because they feared retaliation, but now they bless the French occupation.

231 The herds are sometimes decimated by an epizootic disease, as happened in 1910 and 1911 when the Koupéla area was ravaged by what must have been the bovine plague or peripneumonia. The cows would cough, entirely lose their appetites, and die within a few days.

The Mossi also raise bees. The hives are made of straw or flexible sticks and placed in the trees; sometimes swarms of bees also settle in the hollow trunks of baobabs. The honey is gathered at the end and at the beginning of the winter season; the hive is smoked out and the bees destroyed. Honey is used primarily to make bésé, a kind of [273] hydromel which the Moslem Yarsé, Peul, and Haoussa like very much, and which they are allowed to drink in spite of its fermentation; [237] whereas, in principle, millet beer is forbidden to them. The wax 306] is sold to the jewelry-makers who use it to make bracelets by the lost wax process.

The Mossi grow tobacco in fields around their
248 4 INTRODUCTION
249 homesteads, where they also cultivate their most important cash crops, cotton and indigo, which are used in the manufacture and dyeing of cotton cloth.

● 136 The wild fauna of Mossi country include several species of antelope, deer, monkeys, rabbits, snakes, and wild pigs. Elephants roam the beds of rivers and streams and often destroy cultivated fields, while lions and hyenas distress the people by attacking livestock. The pools and rivers of Mossi country are inhabited by turtles, crocodiles, and various species of scaled and scaleless fish. Chickens, muscovy ducks, and half-domesticated guinea fowl are the most valuable species of birds.

231 The Mossi have long been famous for their splendid donkeys and
[492] horses. Donkeys are sometimes ridden, but they are used primarily as
[439] beasts of burden. Horses are important for military and ceremonial purposes and for export to the tsetse-fly zones to the south. The Mossi raise two main types of cattle: a zebu-like animal in the northern regions and a
[439] dwarf variety in the south. These animals are raised primarily for their milk and for export, and are seldom killed for meat until they are fairly old.
[771] Goats and sheep provide the main source of meat. Hog-raising is not wide-
[178] spread, and seems to be declining in importance with the increased observance of Islamic food taboos, which is on the uprise even among people who are still pagans.

135 The subsoil of Mossi country is not well known, but so far there have been no major discoveries of mineral deposits. The only known gold field
[301] remained unworked in aboriginal times. The Mossi do not like to wear
[325] gold ornaments, preferring jewelry worked from imported copper and
[439] silver. The northern Mossi worked their local iron in aboriginal times, but those in the south obtained this metal from caravan traders.

175 The nineteenth-century reports of Barth and other European travelers
439 indicate that the Mossi conducted a rather extensive foreign trade. At least
[443] six caravan routes passed through their territory, and traders such as the Hausa and Mandingo visited the important Mossi trading centers at Yako, Pouitenga, and Ouagadougou, where they exchanged Saharan and forest products for Mossi livestock and cloth.[3]

101 The Mossi belong to the Voltaic culture area, a name given by Delafosse to the regions drained by the Black, Red, and White Voltas and their tributaries. The area embraces parts of Mali, the Ivory Coast, Dahomey, the Upper Volta, and northern Ghana.[4] It includes a vast congeries of peoples such
[197] as the Dagomba, Mamprusi, Dagari, Birifo, Senufo, Gurmanche, Gurunsi, Lobi, Bobo, Tallensi, Konkomba, Dogon, Somba, Fulse, and Ninisi, all of whom speak languages belonging to the Gur or Moshi-Grunshi group of

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
FA28 Mossi FA28

133 Red and White Voltas are merely a series of small stagnant pools during the dry season. In some low-lying areas around the main water courses, trapped water provides the moisture for dank riverine vegetation.

134 The soils of Mossi country are mainly ferruginous with red argils and pure silicates of aluminum predominating in the northern region. The soils in the south are thin, sandy, and formed from the decom-
137 position of crystalline rocks and sandstones. During the dry season the Mossi landscape appears too sterile to produce plant life, but with the first drops of rain the entire country soon becomes covered with the grasses and shrubs which are characteristic of this Sudanese region. The uncultivated but valuable trees of this area include the Baobab *(Adansonia digitata)*, the locust bean *(Parkia biglobosa)*, the shea-butter *(Butyrospermum parkii)*, the tamarind *(Tamarindus*
24 *indica)* and the kapok *(Bombax costatum)*. The plants which the Mossi cultivate include varieties of cereals, roots and legumes. Sorghums *(Sorghum vulgare)* and millets *(Pennisetum typhoides)* are their staples, with maize *(Zea mays)* filling the role of a secondary but rather useful crop because its growing cycle is shorter than that of other important crops and it breaks the "hungry period." Maize would be a more important crop to the Mossi if it could grow on soil less fertile than what is normally available around the Mossi compound—the area where it brings the greatest yield. Peanuts, onions,
240 rice, beans, okra, peas and sweet potatoes are other food crops. To-
248 bacco is grown for local consumption, but the crops which have the greatest export value are cotton and indigo, used for making cloth and dyeing it.

224 The wild fauna of the country does not provide a major part of the
262 food needs of the Mossi people. The several species of deer and antelope, monkeys, rabbits and wild pig are hunted and used for food.
136 But the elephants and lions which are also found in the country are sources of great distress to the people because the former decimate the growing crops and the latter attack and kill the grazing animals.

231 The Mossi rear two main types of cattle: a zebu-like one in the north-
234 ern regions and a small dwarf variety in the south. These animals are kept primarily for their milk and for export, and are seldom killed
271 for meat until they are very old. The animals which provide the
262 Mossi with meat are goats, sheep, chickens and guinea fowls. Pig-
177 raising is not widespread and seems to be declining in importance with the increasing observance of Islamic food taboos, even among
262 people who are still pagan. Fish forms only a minor part of the Mossi
407 diet and is obtained mainly from traders rather than from local activ-
231 ities. The Mossi also rear donkeys and horses for which they have